

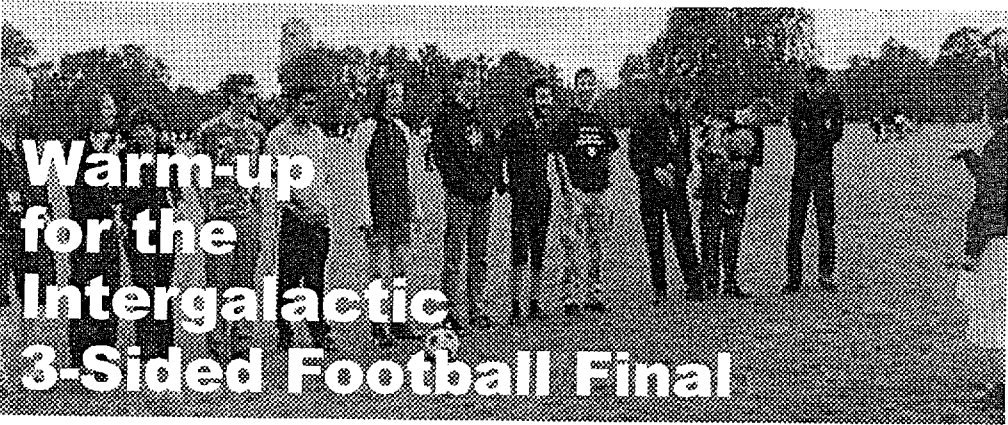
association of autonomous astronauts

space:1999

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★ *ten days that shook the universe*

JUNE 21th



Warm-up for the Intergalactic 3-Sided Football Final

This long awaited challenge contest was held near speakers corner in Hyde park and attracted some of the AAA's most talented teams and players. The number of spectators in Hyde park was estimated at a conservative 10,000, although rather than watch the contest directly, many chose to enter into free debate in the surrounding areas of the pitch in true AAA fashion.

Choosing teams was accomplished by lining up the players by the colour of their shoes and then a random selection algorithm was applied by a non player to achieve three teams of 4-5 people with an additional 'spare team' who chose to play for whoever and whenever they liked. This added initial confusion caused by the newer players not having the rules explained to them. Although concession rates were initially slow mid-way through the first period, an informal alliance amongst the Italian contingent caused the two opposing teams to concede goals rapidly. This disturbing trend was happily countered by the introduction of the AAA under 5's team onto the field with players from inner city and

disconauts AAA upsetting the Italian efforts, bringing the game closer to equilibrium. An informal vote called half time with the scores at 13-11-7.

In the clear light of half time new alliances were formed and several groups spontaneously burst into play well before the end of break, causing a certain apathy and despondency amongst the other two teams who were reluctant to join a field of play where one team was scoring freely into all three goals. However inspired by the site of a mass Eritrean rally achieving levitation to a height roughly the equivalent of an upturned crate, they rejoined the game with renewed vigor. Glorious chaos rained for the last half of the game with several confused players claiming to have achieved "personal bests" for the speed with which a goal could be scored in all three nets. With such individual achievement overwhelming the team ethos it was decided to aggregate the three teams scores and award this amount to all individual players. Thus the final score was 67 to everybody.

An Introduction to 3-Sided Football

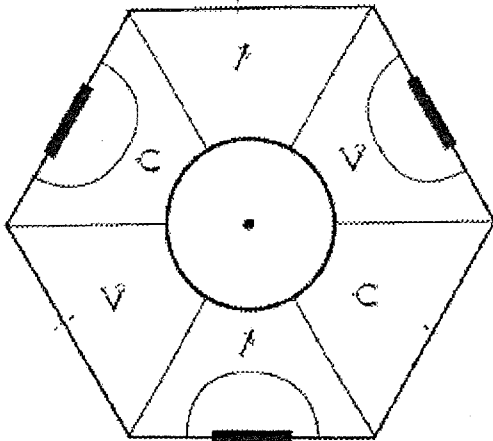
(Note: Three-sided football is used by the AAA as a valuable training exercise for Autonomous Astronauts.)

It appears that the first person to come up with the idea of 3-sided football was Asger Jom, who saw it as a means of conveying his notion of trialectics - a trinitarian supercession of the binary structure of dialectics. We are still trying to discover if there were any actual games organised by him. Before the London Psychogeographic Association organised its first game at the Glasgow Anarchist Summer School in 1993, there is little evidence of any games being played. There is, of course, the rumour that Luther Blissett organised an informal league of youth clubs which played 3-sided football during his stint at Watford in the early eighties. Unfortunately, our research has found no evidence to support this. Nevertheless, Blissett's name will probably remain firmly linked to the 3-sided version of the game, even if in an apocryphal fashion.

The key to the game is that it does not foster aggression or competitiveness. Unlike two-sided football, no team keeps a record of the number of goals they score. However they do keep a tally of the goals they concede, and the winner is determined as the team which concedes least goals. The game deconstructs the mythic bi-polar structure of conventional football, where an us-and-them struggle mediated by the referee mimics the way the media and the state pose themselves as „neutral“ elements in the class struggle. Likewise, it is no psycho-sexual drama of the fuckers and fucked - the possibilities are greatly expanded!

The pitch is hexagonal each team being assigned two opposite sides for bureaucratic purposes should the ball be kicked out of the play. The blank side is called the front side. The side containing the orifice is called the backside, and the orifice is called a goal. Should the ball be thrust through a team's orifice, the team is deemed to have conceded a goal - so in an emblematic fashion this perpetuates the anal-retentive homophobic techniques of conventional football whereby homo-erotic tension is built up, only to be sublimated and repressed. However the trialectic appropriation of this technique dissolves the homo-erotic/homo-phobic bipolarity as a successful

attack will generally imply co-operation with the third team. This should overcome the prominent resistance to women taking their full part in football. Meanwhile the penetration of the defence by two opposing teams imposes upon the defence the task of counterbalancing their disadvantage through sowing the seeds of discord in an alliance which can only be temporary. This will be achieved through exhortation, body language, and an ability to manoeuvre the ball and players into such a position that one opposing team will realise that its interests are better served by breaking off the attack and allying themselves with the defending team.



Pitch laid out for the teams A, C and V

Bearing in mind that such a decision will not necessarily be immediate, a team may well find itself split between two alliances. Such a situation opens them up to the possibility of their enemies uniting, making maximum use of this confusion. 3-sided football is a game of skill, persuasion and psychogeography. When the ball goes out of the play on the frontside, a throw-in is conceded. This is carried out by the team whose frontside it is, unless they had last touch. In that case the throw in is taken by the team whose goal is the nearest. When the ball goes out of the play at the backside, the defending team has a goal kick, unless they had last touch, in which case a corner is taken by the team whose goal is nearest. The semicircle around the goal functions as a penalty area and it may be necessary to use it for some sort of offside rule which has yet to be developed.

Report from a 3-sided Football Match

We head for the park. Richard Essex of the LPA gives us a short lecture. „Three-sided football offers unique problems. How do you keep your team together? What is your identity? The very boundaries of what a team actually is can loosen; we can discover new ways of organisation.“

It is at this point of anti-hierarchical anarchist debate that the correspondent from another football magazine chooses to ask Richard Essex if he is in charge. This really is the wrong question. Essex, kindly, lets it go and continues. „This is not just a case of scoring goals and its not just about footballing skills, other skills are required, too.“

Mainly, it seems, the skill to trick people from another team into thinking you are going to form an alliance with them. This is illustrated early on in proceedings when Jason Skeet of the AAA, calling for the ball, takes delivery of the pass and promptly scores in the goal of the side the pass came from. Embarrassingly, this is the end that Goal is defending. More embarrassingly, it is one of our representatives who has been so obviously and completely duped. Worse still, it's me. It has taken a very short time to realise that with three sides playing one is going to be picked on. It is us.

Both the other two groups press towards our goal, indulging in an orgy of free-scoring libertarian collectivism. The attempt to defend is made all the harder by not knowing any of the people on your side, while furthermore most of them are turned out in gear that could best be described as 'New Age'. Gradually I recognise the man with the purple spiral on his head as being on my side. We start to develop an understanding down the right-hand side. Unfortunately, it isn't an understanding of three-sided football.

We remain under the cosh and the score reaches 4-0-0. But then Group Three let in a goal and suddenly the wisdom of their pact with Group Two seems less sure. Tentative steps are taken to reform the on-pitch alliance, but talk of oppressive structures and fascistic centre-forwards gets us nowhere. Then a burly Australian in a

rugby shirt, who's come for the fun, barges through and lays it on. The goal may be no more than a discarded Cure T-shirt and a smelly black jumper, but it's there in front of me. I shoot, I score, the Australian cuddles me. We're 4-1-1 and the game is anyone's.

Extracts from an article by Michael Hodges,
Goal Magazine, August 1996

UPCOMING SPACE 1999 EVENTS:

Monday June 21st:

Noon: Press Conference & AAA Bologna Psychic Attack against NASA

Venue: Blackwall Steps. Yabsley Street E14. Blackwall DLR.

6pm: Foundation for Art in Zero Gravity Environments launch event:

Julie Bacon: AQUARANTINE INTERCOURSE incontinently itinerant, interdisciplinary living in n degrees;

Andy Smith: (Project One): THERE'S NEVER ENOUGH SPACE a meditation on the possibilities and practice of taking performance into new landscapes;

Stuart B (Nomad AAA): POLAROID HAIKU crossing innumerable borders with simultaneous actions.

Free entrance

Venue: Central St. Martin's College, 107 Charing Cross Road, WC2.

8pm: Solstice outdoor training for autonomous astronauts, featuring star navigation, low level gravity practice, dreamtime workshop, and astral projection exercise.

Venue: Hampstead Heath, Assemble Hampstead Heath BR, Southend Road, NW3

Tuesday 22nd:

8pm: Nocturnal Emissions (1st London gig in 12 years), plus Beam Me Up, KJ (performing music from classic Star Trek and featuring voice of KJ Grant, ex-Cop Shoot Cop), plus DJs Interassiter, OSI and John Eden.

Venue: Upstairs at the Garage, Holloway Road N7. Highbury & Islington tube.

£6/£4. Sponsored by Blast First! and Club Integral

"The Five Year Plan:

Propaganda and printed matter from the Association of Autonomous Astronauts."

Open daily from 1pm - 6pm throughout the festival.
Event updates, information and your input.

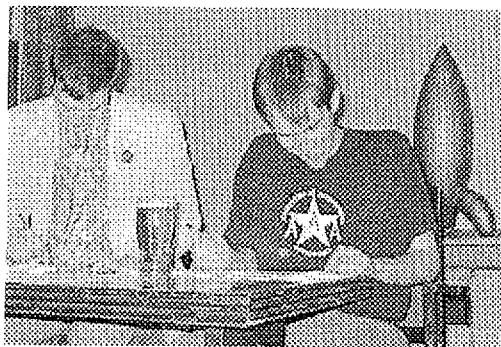
Info Centre, 123A Mare Street, E8.

Bethnal Green Tube, buses 26, 48, 55, 106, 253.

Space 1999 Quiz and Debate



The evening meeting held in the upstairs room of the 'Penny Black' on Mount Pleasant began with a stiff quiz set by Raido AAA (and the guy with the cool tie) which left many people revising their knowledge of space facts. It may be that some of us need more study before our glorious final departure (with the exception of clear winners the Angel team which won the quiz with amazing 31 points from 50). The main prize was several issues of the Idler magazine provided graciously by Tom from our sponsors the Idler magazine.



Quizmasters chuckle gently whilst marking AAA result sheets

Before the results of the quiz were officially announced, passionate debate took place on the topic 'Star Trek V Babylon 5' between Kaveh and Fabian respectively. Fabian entered the fray with his main thrust along functional rather than empirical lines, claiming that the relative timeslots and ongoing plot lines encouraged a deeper sense of well being in the Babylon 5 viewer. Kaveh countered quickly arguing that in fact both series failed miserably to address any concerns of the working class and were thoroughly steeped in bourgeois rhetoric. This of course left him on shaky ground as regards to arguing a defence for his charge, but lead into an interesting audience discussion about the sterility of current north American science fiction and much mourning over the loss of Dr. Who and Blakes 7. Actual consumation of the debate was deferred to the consensus that 'both series were crap'.

Other space news

- Those who were disappointed that rocketeer Zigi Sinetti could not talk on Saturday will be overjoyed to hear that Zigi actually spent the weekend at his Lincoln based test site preparing his two LOX motors for the planned launch of a vehicle later this year. Zigi reported that both static burns and tests of the electronic sussystems were a tremendous success, and is confident that he will be able to achieve a height of 137 km in his first launch. Although Zigi's main aim is to orbit small payloads his groundbreaking work clearly points the way for other rocketeers to begin building larger vehicles for their own purposes.
- The forthcoming 30th anniversary of the first moon landing, on the 21st of July, is being promoted by NASA on their web-site. It is an attempt to capitalise on any publicity they can, and to boost their failing public image. (www.nasa.gov).

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